

CSZ Wins New Recognition

Once again, CSZ has been recognized as a leader among Reform congregations. Last week, we were notified of a new award to be handed out annually by the leadership of active congregations in California. This award recognizes synagogues with an outstanding level of *yadah yadah*. While there is no exact translation, we have been advised that the closest meaning in English is the concept of "process."

Certainly those who have been members for a long time would agree that we are unusually high in this attribute (one leader noted that "no one has more of it or spends more time on it than we do!"). Our endless and prolonged committee meetings were recognized as examples. Another reviewer noted that it was clear that we also see it as a value to teach our children, because we start very early with infant and toddler chavurot, where the little ones can observe their parents going on and on with parenting process issues. The most telling example of all was, of course, our famous annual Advance, where congregational leaders spend an entire weekend processing our process. The form of the award ceremony will be discussed at forthcoming committee meetings.

Kadimah Kut-Ups

—Tinky Winkyvitz

As part of a "Jews in America" history project, Kadimah students declared a strike last Wednesday, refusing to study Hebrew, light candles, sing songs, clean their rooms or eat their broccoli. Their list of demands is as follows: 1) CSZ should immediately hire the cast of "Friends" to teach Kadimah; 2) All children should immediately be considered as having been bar or bat mitzvah'd and gifted appropriately; 3) All service leaders should dress as "PlayStation"

New Building for CSZ

—Reuven Relentless

Owing to the tremendous fertility of our current members and a huge influx of new ones, it has become increasingly clear to many at CSZ that we need a bigger building. A fact-finding committee has been investigating this situation and has examined numerous possibilities. It has come to their attention that there may be an great opportunity to take over the lease on the San Francisco City Hall after Disney finishes filming there.

The Wall Street Journal, in a supportive editorial, applauds this adventurous move, calling it a "hostile takeover" of one the country's liberal bastions that the *Journal* hopes will be a harbinger of things to come.

The staff at CSZ is eagerly looking forward to a raffle which will determine who gets to sit in what is currently Mayor Willie Brown's office. Services would be held under the beautifully restored dome.

We will have to provide some monetary compensation to current City Hall workers, but because there are far fewer of them than there used to be, this will probably amount to no more than \$20,000 per CSZ member per year.

characters and act accordingly; 4) Gameboys should be provided along with prayerbooks at all services.

In keeping with the spirit of the history lesson, the Kadimah teaching staff, joined by the Children's Education Board and the Bureau of Jewish Education, immediately expelled all the students and bussed in replacements. Kadimah parents, who liked having somewhere to send their kids on Saturday mornings and Wednesday afternoons, are considering their demands.

Our Pets Belong at CSZ!

—Daffodil Schwartz

Does your cat tear up your furniture when you leave for Friday night services? Does your dog disturb the neighbors with his howling when you're at Saturday services? The solution, according to members of CSZ's newly-formed Species Inclusiveness (SI) Committee, is not to punish your pets for their misbehavior. Instead, committee members insist, your pet should be as welcome as you are at the shul.

"Our pets are as important to us as our lovers, children and parents—if not more so," said Paula Fluffysmom. "After all, your cat will cuddle with you all night but not insist on couple's counseling when you throw her/him out of bed in the morning. And no dog has ever complained when you spend an evening with another dog. Besides, our pets have a spiritual life that should be recognized and honored; just because they choose to worship in front of their food bowl is no reason to dismiss them. For CSZ to refuse to admit our pets goes against everything we believe in."

In order to prepare our congregation for the new arrivals, the SI Committee will meet with the Ritual Committee to begin writing species-inclusive liturgy. The Adult Education/Talmud Torah committee is sponsoring a diversity dialogue titled "Fighting Like Cats and Dogs" and next week's sermon will be on "Jewish, gay and a pet owner—what does the Bible tell us about this?"

For more information, don't call Renée in the office.

Stamp Your Feet at Shabbat Services

Did you know that *She'll be Coming Round the Mountain* was written by a Jew and is really about Shabbat—L'cha Dodi, specifically? The "she" is the Shechineh, the Shabbat bride. The "six white horses" are the days of the week before Shabbat. "We'll go down to meet her" refers to going to greet the Shabbat bride. And "oh we'll all have chicken and dumplings (kneidle)" is of course the Shabbat meal.

Save the Date!

Counting the Omer

The omer is the period of 49 days between Passover and Shavuot, beginning this year on April 2 and ending on May 20. It is traditional to count the omer each evening as the new day begins. Biblically, counting the omer (literally, "a measure of grain"), had agricultural significance. Passover marks the beginning of the grain harvest. At that time, the counting of the omer period was a way for farmers to mark the time of the harvest, a sign of their concern for a successful crop. Beyond agricultural significance, Passover marks the deliverance from slavery in Egypt and Shavuot marks the revelation of the Torah at Mount Sinai; the omer is the time chain that links the two. The omer represents the exodus and our people's move from slavery to freedom.

According to the Kabbalists, each day of the omer is an ascension from one of the forty-nine levels of the impurity of Egypt. This is expressed by seeing each day as a combination of two of the aspects of the mystical sefirot that make up the divine. There are meditations for each day of the omer that correspond with each of these aspects.

At CSZ this year, we will observe the omer in accordance with this mystical tradition each Wednesday between Passover and Shavuot at 6 pm, with communal meditation led by Rabbi Litman and Program Director Renée Bauer. Also, to facilitate daily observance of the omer, we will have available a packet of meditations for congregants. We encourage you to come by anytime the synagogue is open (9-5 on weekdays) to use our beautiful new sanctuary as a place to meditate and observe the mitzvah of counting the omer.

Yom HaShoah

You are invited to a community-wide observance of Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day, sponsored by the Jewish Community Relations Council, on Monday, April 12 at 7:30 pm at Congregation Emanu-El, 2 Lake Street.

Diverse Views of God

Are you an atheist who practices Judaism without believing in God? Do you have an intimate relationship with the divine? Are you struggling to decide if there is a God? Are you confused about how God fits into Jewish practice? If so, come to a special Shabbat afternoon discussion about CSZ members' diverse perspectives on God on April 10 at noon (immediately following Shabbat morning services). Over a light lunch we will debate, discuss and question our beliefs (or lack thereof) about God. This program is part of the Adult Education/Talmud Torah Committee's series of dialogues which explore the diversity within our congregation.

Women's Passover Seder

Join with Jewish women from around the Bay Area and experience the Passover seder from a women's perspective. CSZ is pleased to again co-sponsor with Congregation Emanu-El and Congregation Beth Shalom's Rosh Chodesh group this inspirational seder for women of all ages. The seder will be led by Rabbis Sydney Mintz and Helen Cohen from Congregation Emanu-El, and CSZ's Program Director Renée Bauer, with music provided by members of Vocelot. The seder will be held at Congregation Emanu-El, 2 Lake Street in San Francisco, on the fifth night of Passover, Sunday April 4. The cost is \$35 for members of any participating synagogue and \$45 for non-members. No one will be turned away for lack of funds.

Yom Ha'Atzmaut

April 21 is Israel's 51st birthday. We will celebrate with Israeli dancing at the Adult Education/Talmud Torah class on "Jewish Spirituality Through Movement" that evening. In addition, Shabbat services on April 23 will have a special Israel-focused theme, including Israeli treats at the oneg.

Mishkan Dolores Benefit

Singer-songwriter Jenn Guttler will perform a benefit show to support our new Mishkan on Saturday, April 10 at 6:30 pm. You'll be asked to make a donation of between \$7 and \$15, although no one will be turned away for lack of funds. Also, please bring a vegetarian dish to share for a potluck dinner which will follow the performance.

For more information, including location, call Ellen (early evenings only) at 337-4678.

Lev Raphael to Visit CSZ

CSZ is pleased to be hosting, "From Mysterious Jews to Jewish Mysteries," a special erev Shabbat program with author Lev Raphael. Lev, a Jewish gay fiction writer, will read from his new book, *The Death of a Constant Lover*, the third in his highly praised series of mystery novels. Before writing mysteries, Lev was a prize-winning short story writer, novelist, critic and professor. His collection of short stories, *Dancing on Tisha B'Av*, and his novel, *Winter Eyes*, were focused on issues of Jewishness, the Holocaust and gay identity. Although his recent novels are of a different genre, these themes still emerge throughout the work. The main character in *The Death of a Constant Lover* is a gay Jewish man in a relationship with a son of Holocaust survivors who struggles to embrace his Jewish identity.

Join Lev on Friday, April 9 at 6:30 pm for a reading and discussion over dinner before Shabbat services. The cost to attend the reading and dinner is \$15 for members and \$20 for non-members. If you would like to come to the reading and not purchase dinner, the cost is \$5 for members and \$7 for non-members. Call the CSZ office by April 7 to reserve your dinner. This program is co-sponsored by CSZ's Book Group, Metropolitan Community Church and A Different Light Bookstore. Lev's new book will be available for purchase that evening.

Observing the Mitzvot

Every Tuesday evening, a group of us get together at the shul and discuss how to live spiritual lives as Jews and allies. Recently we've been studying the mitzvot, the commandments. I usually translate the Hebrew word "mitzvah" after Kierkegaard's felicitous phrase, "moral imperative." The demand of morality on our souls is not such an uncommon experience, but what



Rabbi Jane Litman

does it mean? If the mitzvot are commandments, who is the commander? Can commandments be morally binding without the authority of a personal God, of whom many of us are skeptical? Can we existentially feel moved to action, even if we are struggling with ultimate belief? Do we, in some mystical nonrational way, feel ourselves commanded? How do we understand an inner command which does not seem in keeping with the world around us?

In my mind, the personal feeling of commandedness is the equivalent of contemporary revelation. I am commanded to engage with my history and community to struggle toward morality. It isn't really a choice for me (and in some ways I see this as similar to the call of sexual orientation and gender identity); rather it is a powerful impulse toward my deepest spiritual integrity, a command, a mitzvah.

Since I am spiritually bound to a process rather than any particular outcome, some of Judaism's ancient mitzvot fall by the wayside in my life. I don't practice *shatnez*, the separation of wool and linen. If my partner died (God forbid), I wouldn't wed my brother-in-law. But the reality is that I experience a day-to-day life filled with mitzvot: my morning blessings; what I eat; attention to daily study; caring for my family—however it is constructed. These are mitzvot.

Our sages provide many lists of important mitzvot, one of which may be found in Sha'ar Zahav's Shabbat morning siddur. Their moral imperatives include giving *tzedakah*, *bikkur holim* (visiting the sick), rejoicing with lovers, accompanying the dead to the grave and

caring for the bereaved, honoring our parents and the aged, not to mention the more mundane but equally powerful mitzvot of blessing bread and lighting candles.

All of these actions are morally commanded of us as we go about the daily activities of our lives. Other commandments, however, we are enjoined to seek out, even if they do not come to us. The foremost of these is creating peace where there is strife. This is not an easy mitzvah to fulfill, but it is a rewarding one. Let us remember and honor this mitzvah in our personal lives and congregational community.

Feygelah Schmeygelah: Queer Jewish Humor

Join a spectacular line-up of funny feygelahs and dykelahs for Kung Pao Kosher Comedy's second annual celebration of gay and lesbian Jewish humor on Saturday, May 1, at the Herbst Theatre, 401 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco.

This year's revue features the Kinsey Sicks: America's Favorite Dragapella Beauty Shop Quartet; Michele Balan—New York's premiere Jewish lesbian comic; Lynne Jassem's StepFire Tap Dance Theater—San Francisco's all-women nouveau vaudeville tap company; and host/producer/CSZ member Lisa Geduldig.

Partial proceeds will benefit the Holocaust Center of Northern California's "Lesbians and the Holocaust" project. Tickets are \$18-\$20 in advance, \$20-\$22 at the door. Contact City Box Office, 392-4400 or any BASS outlet. For more information, call 522-3737 or visit www.igc.org/koshercomedy.

Holocaust Center Benefit

The Northern California Holocaust Center is sponsoring a program entitled "Lesbians and the Holocaust" on May 16, from 3-7:30 pm at the Victoria Theater, 2961 16th Street, in San Francisco. For more information, contact the Holocaust Center at 751-6040 or programs@holocaust-sf.org.

Sukkot in April

All of you who participated in years past or newcomers wanting to give it a try, set aside April 25 and get your paint brushes ready! Sukkot in April is just around the corner.

Once again, we are taking on a major project for Sukkot in April. For the past two years, CSZ has been a leader in Sukkot in April. We have provided 50 volunteers each year, successfully renovating two large community buildings: the Asian Pacific Islander Wellness Center and the Westside Community Mental Health Center. We painted; we laid carpeting; we gardened; we ate and, of course, we had fun.

Please join us for our third annual Sukkot in April project. We need 50 volunteers again; and this year everyone 13 years or over is welcome to join us. You don't need to be skilled. You don't need your own tools. You just need to register by April 9 by calling Renée in the office, filling out a form available at the synagogue or calling Laura Lowe (247-2409). We look forward to working with you.

Our New Siddur

—Lyssa Friedman, Ritual Chair

The Siddur Committee, a subgroup of the Ritual Committee, has completed a draft of the first section of our new prayerbook. Over the coming weeks, we will be rolling out the new Siddur, section by section, after members of the Ritual Committee have reviewed them. Beginning in April, the congregation will have an opportunity to try the new prayerbook at Friday evening services. Later this year, we will incorporate final changes and publish the completed work.

Everyone's input is welcome throughout this process. You can help by:

- Attending Siddur Committee meetings, which are open to all. The next meetings are April 8 and April 22, 6:30-8:30 pm, at CSZ.
- Providing feedback to Siddur Committee co-chairs, Dev Felder Noily (753-5097 or saradev@sirius.com) or Brian Besser (255-7967 or frog@sirius.com).

Do you have e-mail?

Drop us a line at

shaarzahav@igc.apc.org

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Classified Ads are \$5 for up to 20 words, plus \$1 for each 10 additional words.

Payment must accompany ad and should be sent to Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, 290 Dolores St., San Francisco, California 94103, marked: attention *Forward* advertising. We reserve the right to reject any ad.

April 1999/Volume 22, Issue 8.



President's Column

Our Magnificent Staff

Over my years as a member of this congregation, I have seen us grow and change in many ways. Some of the changes are obvious, like our size and our new building, but others are not.

When I joined this congregation 16 years ago, we were still getting our bearings and did not have the diversity of membership or services that we do now.

Having an accessible building, a religious school, and playing a major part in the larger organized Jewish community were things we dreamed about. Since that time, we have grown and prospered. Not only do we have a wonderful, involved, and committed membership that works to make our community possible, we also have a magnificent staff.

With Renée as our program director, our adult programming has blossomed. She has energy, enthusiasm and creativity. Both through her own talents and her ability to work with committee chairs, Renée has been a great asset to us.

As always, Lea continues to handle the curves we throw her. We can move, share space, move again, construct a building around her and constantly change our minds concerning mailings, and she handles it. Her ability to keep the details in order and never drop a stitch keeps us going.

Melanie has been a welcome addition recently as secretary to the Rabbi. Max and Megan keep our building



Diana Buchbinder

clean, rearrange furniture as often as we ask, and keep watch over the door for us on Friday nights.

David, our educator, is usually seen during Kadimah or as the conductor of children's activities at special events. Just before David joined us in 1997, we had embarked upon a program of restructuring Kadimah. In a few short years, we had grown from a school of eight children to over 40, and we needed many things. Then-president David Stein had replaced the informal Children's Education Committee with a more formal Children's Education Board, whose members serve at the request of the president and are charged with school administrative matters like attendance policies and fund raising. During this time, the congregation also voted to add a synagogue educator position to the budget.

When our educator position became vacant in late 1997, we hired David Shneer. Under his leadership, Kadimah has flourished. With the able and steadfast assistance of our beloved Phyllis, he has brought structure and vision to our school. Maybe you can join the Kadimah Walk-a-Thon to help raise funds. David will be taking a leave of absence from his position as Educator from May until December. While we will miss him, he has committed to return to us in January 2000, finish out that school year and remain with us for the 2000-2001 school year.

To all our staff, I say thank you. With you, our community is a richer and fuller place. While we may not always show it, we appreciate all that you do for us. We know CSZ would not be the same without you.

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Kadimah Korner

—David Shneer, Educator

As the school year winds down, and as spring begins, Kadimah has planned a number of programs to welcome spring, and to mark the many holidays that occur this April.

Kadimah Classes

There will be no Kadimah classes on Saturday, April 3 or Wednesday, April 7 during Pesakh. Aside from these holiday dates, all other Kadimah classes will be held at their regularly scheduled times.

All Parent Meeting

Following our parent education program, all Kadimah families are invited to have a "nearing-the-end-of-the-year" wrap-up meeting to discuss the successes of this school year and the directions we want our school to go in the future. The goal of this meeting is to create a forum to discuss the shape of Kadimah in the future. The meeting will be on April 17, from 11 to 11:45 am.

Torah Study

A reminder that Torah study will take place in the sanctuary every Saturday at 9:30 am. If anyone is interested in leading Torah study, please contact Renée in the office. This is your chance to educate yourselves while your children are in school.

Kadimah Music Cooperative

Are you interested in teaching our children music? Kadimah is beginning

a music cooperative in which musically talented adults get together, learn music and then come to Kadimah to teach music to the children. This is an exciting addition to our Kadimah program and to adult education. Interested musicians should contact me at the office.

My Leave

On a final note, I will be taking an eight-month leave of absence to conduct research for my dissertation on Communist Yiddish Culture in the Soviet Union. To carry out the research, my partner, Gregg Drinkwater, and I will be traveling to Russia, Ukraine and Israel, although we will be based in Moscow. I will be back at the end of December to continue working on our flourishing educational programs. I will miss Sha'ar Zahav and the Kadimah community while I am gone.

Parent Education: Gay Male Parenting

At CSZ, we are aware of the gay baby boom because of the number of babies and children in the synagogue. While many lesbian moms fill the pews, we also have an increasing number of gay men parenting in our community. Gay men are becoming parents in a variety of ways—as couples, as co-parents and as bio dads. As part of our Saturday morning parent education series, on April 17 at 10 am (following 9:30 Torah study) we will have a panel discussion on the diversity of gay fathering. This session will explore the options, obstacles and joys of being a gay dad. All are encouraged to attend.

Tot Shabbat

April is full of opportunities for CSZ toddlers, preschoolers and their families to celebrate, socialize and learn together.

East Bay Tot Shabbat

On Friday, April 9 at 6:30 pm, families are invited to celebrate Shabbat in the East Bay with dinner and an interactive service with singing and prayers. The focus of the service will be on learning about mitzvot we do as Jews. Call Renée in the CSZ office for location information.

Family Picnic

On Sunday, April 18, families are invited to a picnic and play date at Douglass Park in Noe Valley from 11 am–1 pm. This will give us an opportunity to play and socialize with each other. Families should bring their own lunches, but drinks will be provided.

Tot Shabbat at CSZ

Regularly scheduled tot Shabbat this month is on Saturday morning April 24 at 10:30 am. In addition to our usual Shabbat morning tot service, we will celebrate Israel's 51st birthday by learning about Israel and making our own Israeli flags to take home. Families are invited to come early at 9:30 am for bagels and Torah study.

Struggling to Bring Children Into Your Family

A monthly peer-led support group is forming for CSZ members who have been struggling to bring children into their family. The purpose is to provide a place to give and get support for infertility issues, adoption strategies, co-parenting, etc. The group is open to all CSZ members who have been longing to bring children into their family and are facing more roadblocks than expected. If you have questions about whether this group is for you, call Judy (510/532-9661) or Alice (510/525-3670).

The group will meet the third Tuesday of the month at CSZ from 7–9 pm, beginning April 20.

Kadimah-Led Service

Come hear the synagogue's youth and their families lead services on Saturday, April 24 at 10:15 am, when Kadimah leads a congregational Saturday morning service. Everyone is welcome. Services will be followed by a simple oneg.

Save the Date!

First Annual Kadimah Walk-a-Thon

Sunday • May 16 • 10:30 am

Watch the *Forward* for more information

Adult Education/Talmud Torah Studies

Trail Midrash

Spring fever? Celebrate Shabbat on April 24 at Trail Midrash. Get outside and enjoy the sunshine and California's natural beauty while studying the portion of the week. April's hike will be an easy hike to ease back into sunny days in the woods. Everyone is welcome. RSVP to the CSZ office.

Queer Talmud

Rabbi Litman and CSZ members continue to meet downtown every other Tuesday to study what is queer in the Talmud. This spring the class is exploring texts on closeting and coming out and on physicality and spirituality. Drop in for some lunchtime traditional text-based learning on April 13 and 27 at noon at the Hobart Building, 582 Market Street at Montgomery, in the 10th floor conference room.

Jewish Spirituality Through Movement

Do you need to get out of your head and into your body? CSZ is offering a class entitled "Jewish Spirituality Through Movement." We will explore various types of cross-cultural dance and movement—yoga, salsa, Israeli dance—to engage our bodies in our pursuit of a more spiritually rich life. Classes begin in April; watch for more details or call the CSZ office for more information.

Torah Study

Celebrate Shabbat each week in April with CSZ friends at Saturday morning Torah Study. We hold weekly Torah study at 9:30 am, led alternately by Rabbi Litman and lay leaders. Torah study is an excellent way to begin or continue your Torah learning. It is an informal discussion open to everyone—those who are seasoned Torah learners and those with no experience studying the weekly portion. Bagels and coffee are provided to help wake you up for a lively discussion. If you are interested in leading Torah study, call Renée in the CSZ office.

Building Wish List

We need the following items for our new building. Can you help?

- One electric oven
- One small table (about three feet high)
- Child-size tables
- Toys for preschoolers
- One lectern (ok, we know you probably won't have one, but we can hope!)

If you can donate any of these items, please contact Tiela Chalmers at 386-6738 or tchalmers@sfbay.org.

Naches

To **Beth Rubin and David Wish**, on the birth and naming of their daughter, Maya Dvora.

To **Jeri Lynn Cohen and Jaime Kibben**, on the birth and naming of their daughter, Julia Rose.

To **Lauren Augusta**, on her entrance into the covenant.

To **Donnovan Somera**, on his entrance into the covenant.

To **Mike Zimmerman**, on his new position as Outreach and Development Director for Volunteers in Parole, a 27-year-old organization that recruits attorneys to mentor young parolees.

To **Jennifer Hirsch**, for being accepted to University of Oregon Graduate School of Architecture.

To **David Posner**, for completing and defending his dissertation in environmental science.

To **Dan Bellm**, whose first book of poetry, *One Hand on the Wheel*, will be published this month. His book is a series of linked pieces written in the year after his father's death, and has been chosen to launch a new California Poetry Series from Roundhouse Press in Berkeley.

To **Richard Inlander**, who has been appointed Chair of the Cemetery Committee of Sinai Memorial Chapel.



CSZ Purim party, March 1, 1999. Nancy Kates, Joe Hample and Salem Buchholz. Photo by Reineres Susbilla.

Rabbi's Calendar

On April 3, Rabbi Litman's sermon will be entitled "May They be Bound in the Bond of Eternal Life." On April 23, Rabbi Litman's sermon will be entitled "You Shall be Holy, Because I, Adonai, Am Holy."

Rabbi Litman will be on vacation from Tuesday, April 6 through Sunday, April 11. On April 25, Rabbi Litman will be at the UAHC Consultation on Conscience in Washington, DC. On April 30, Rabbi Litman will be at the UAHC Regional Kallah at Camp Newman.

FDIC-insured institution to see how institutions are doing. Follow-up visits will be conducted through the Year 2000. "Examiners are determining whether the board of directors and senior management are dedicating the appropriate resources to address technical problems, and if the management understands what the regulators expect," Bernardo says. "Examiners also look at whether the bank's management understands how the Year 2000 date change can affect the institution's customers and if appropriate steps are being taken to minimize problems that could disrupt service."

• On-site assessments of many of the companies used by the banking industry for computer products and services. Virtually every bank and savings institution relies on data service providers and software vendors. The banking regulators are visiting the most significant of these companies—more than 300 firms—to check whether they are correcting Y2K-related problems in their products and services.

A Critical Phase

In late 1998, financial institutions, data service providers and software vendors entered the most critical phase of their Year 2000 project management efforts. By this time, these organizations should have checked their computer programs line by line, identified what needed to be corrected and made the necessary changes. Now, they are putting their fixes to the test. This means that banking institutions are running their

computer programs using dates after January 1, 2000, to see whether the changes were done correctly. The test results will provide the clearest indication whether a computer system is ready for the Year 2000 and will allow time for additional corrections, if necessary.

The vast majority of institutions are doing a good job getting ready for the Year 2000. Those found lacking may be subject to actions from federal and state regulators that would require corrective measures. "The regulators will deal aggressively with institutions that should be doing more to address Year 2000 deficiencies," says

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By March 31, 1999...

FDIC-insured financial institutions that contract with outside companies for their computer services should be almost done testing their computer systems to make sure they will correctly recognize dates and handle transactions properly in the Year 2000.

By June 30, 1999...

Insured institutions should finish testing all computer systems and transactions that involve electronic data exchanges with outside parties.

Insured institutions should be using computer programs that have been fixed and tested to deal with Year 2000 problems. Please submit articles via e-mail to robin@csz.com. If you do not have e-mail, please submit them on a 3½-inch disk and mail to CSZ. No late submissions will be accepted without prior approval of the Forward editor.

Michael Zamorski, DOS Deputy Director and chairman of a committee that guides the FDIC's Y2K efforts.

Bank regulators are encouraged by what they have seen. But because it still is possible that an FDIC-insured financial institution could have problems in the Year 2000, the FDIC and other federal and state regulators are working to minimize potential disruptions in service to consumers. And, as always, the FDIC will protect consumers with deposit insurance, which will be unaffected by the Year 2000 date change.

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Anniversaries

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- 29 Colette Patt and Jennifer Lorvick



Oneg Sponsors

These generous people sponsored the Oneg Shabbat in recent weeks:

- 3/5 **Steve Polsky and Mark Oliver**, in honor of their 10th anniversary.
- 3/12 **Lauren Augusta and Hilary Zaid**, in honor of Lauren's entrance into the covenant.
- 3/12 **Dan Halpern**, in loving memory of his mother, Esther Halpern.
- 3/19 **Florence and Gary Feldman**, in honor of Donovan Somera's entrance into the covenant.
- 3/26 **La'atid**, in honor of Kulanu.

New Member Potluck

Whether you are a new member of CSZ, a not-so-new member, or a seasoned participant, the Membership Committee invites you to a potluck on Sunday, May 2, 4-6 pm. Come meet Rabbi Litman, President Diana Buchbinder and other CSZ leaders. Learn more about CSZ and volunteer opportunities, schmooze with other CSZ'niks, and of course, eat great food! The potluck will be in the community room at 345 Church Street (between 15th and 16th), behind the home of Alex Ingersoll and David Stein.

Please bring a vegetarian or dairy dish or dessert—enough to share with about six people. Children, partners, family and friends are warmly welcome. For more information and to RSVP, call Sara Haber (621-1248) or Ami Zusman (510/339-6143).

Also, as part of Shabbat services on Friday, May 7, we will recognize those members who have joined the CSZ family during the previous six months; the Membership Committee will sponsor the Oneg following services in their honor. Please come!

HIV+ Support Group

CSZ has a monthly support group for members living with HIV/AIDS, their families and partners, in addition to quarterly Shabbat dinners. Mark your calendar for the next support group meeting on Saturday, April 17, 3 pm, location TBA. For further information, please call the synagogue office.

Condolences

We extend our condolences to members who have suffered recent losses:

Judith Holiber, on the death of her mother, Caryl Holiber.

Larry Wexler, on the death of his mother, Judy Wexler.

Sam Walters, on the death of his father, Harry Walters.

Nancy Silverrod, on the death of her grandfather, Paul Cherin.

Yavn'ela Oline, on the death of her grandfather, Paul Gresley.

Mike Rankin, on the death of his friend, Don Pinson.

Jerry Geffner, Drew Parker, Andy Schwartz and David Rosenzweig, on the death of their friend, Ira Kolkin.

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Remembering the Past

Because of time considerations, Suzanne Loeb did not deliver this talk at our Harvey Milk Teach-In on November 22, 1998. Her memoir, *At the Mercy of Strangers*, reviewed in the January issue of the Jewish Bulletin of Northern California, is available in our gift shop.

It is a great honor for me to speak at Sha'ar Zahav.

I am impressed by your new sanctuary and by the number of you attending this special celebration on the Yahrzeit of Harvey Milk. Today we pray for freedom from oppression, for lesbians and gays, and for Jews everywhere.

Your celebrations could not come at a more appropriate time. Jews, gays and other oppressed minorities once more realize that battles for equality are a continuous struggle. A few synagogues are defaced with anti-Semitic slogans. It is impossible to utter the name of Matthew Shepherd without crying, and reports of the happenings in Washington demonstrate that our most elementary laws of privacy are threatened.

I am a writer by profession. Last year, I wrote *At the Mercy of Strangers; Growing Up on the Edge of the Holocaust*. The book includes a diary I kept while in hiding. Curiously, *Strangers* is an upbeat book. Survival always is. Sometimes, when I read a passage at a book signing, the audience wonders about the trivia I recorded in the diary during those perilous years. For those of us who were fortunate enough to survive, I tell my listeners, the holocaust was like a long, fatal illness. One fears the end, but in the meantime life continues with its ups and downs, its small joys and defeats. This is very much like living with AIDS.

As most of you know, my son David died of AIDS in 1993. Rabbi Kahn conducted a beautiful service for him at the Danvers Street synagogue. It is in David's memory that I am here today. David took comfort in the fact that I survived the Holocaust. Aptly, the AIDS epidemic has been compared to a holocaust.

As you well know, the Jews were not the Nazis' only victims. Let me begin with a personal memory.

I was a child when Hitler came to power in Germany, and my parents did their best to shield my sister and me from the dreadful events surrounding us. Some of what happened neverthe-

less filtered through. So it was that my mom, an art collector, went to an auction held at the estate of somebody called Freiherr (Sir) Von Garvens. Sir Von Garvens, my mom told me, was gay; and that is why he had to leave Hanover, his and my hometown. I am sure that I was too young to understand what was meant by gay or by persecution, but the information sank in and became part of my life's fabric.

During the liberal Weimar Republic, which preceded the Third Reich, tolerance for gays and lesbians was high. Homosexual clubs flourished in Berlin, as did the gay press. In 1899, Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld, a homosexual Jew and liberal physician, founded the Scientific Humanitarian Committee, and later, in 1919, the Institute for Sexual Research.

One of the goals of this temporary acceptance was to repeal §175, which, since 1871, made male homosexuality a criminal offense punishable by a jail sentence. §175 was used by the Nazis to terrorize the gay community. There were no laws regulating the behavior of lesbians. This does not signify tolerance, but simply that, back then, women did not count. According to Richard Plant, the author of *The Pink Triangle*, 43,000 homosexual men were officially sentenced under §175 between 1936 and 1939 alone. I am sure the lives of many more were marred unofficially.

Since I am here today, I was not among Hitler's ultimate victims. *At the Mercy of Strangers* is the story of my survival as a hidden child during these turbulent times. The book was published last year, more than 50 years after the events it recounts. Hidden children like me were reluctant to tell their story because we did survive, and many of us did not have it "that bad." I was never in a camp. My nuclear family survived and I have had a beautiful life, even though, as you know, it is tinged with immense sadness.

Are you on the Net?

Visit our web site at

www.shaarzahav.org

Social Action/Tikkun Olam Calendar

Mark your calendars and sign up for a Social Action/Tikkun Olam project now. Call either Laura Lowe (247-2409) or Allan Berenstein (863-8033) to volunteer or for more information about any of the following:

- **April 25:** Sukkot in April
- **May 8:** Ron Wilmot Bike Ride with Project Inform
- **May 23:** Habitat for Humanity Communities of Faith Workday
- **August:** Back to School Supplies Drive with S.F. Dept. of Family & Children's Services
- **October 17:** Susan B. Koman Race for the Cure

New Members

The Membership Committee is pleased to announce that our congregation gained the following new members this month. A warm welcome to the most recent people to join our family:

James Cohen

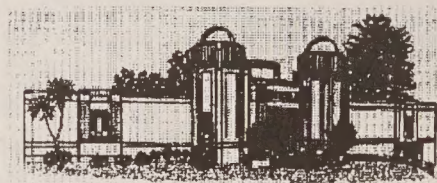
Mark Gershman

Susan Gonzalez

Marius Greenspan

Suzanne London

We are grateful that our congregation continues to grow. It is up to all of us to help our new members feel welcome as they become active participants in our community.



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Birthdays

3	Nathan Birnbaum
3	Arthur Friedman
3	Eric Geffner
5	Heather Fox
6	Edward Schultz
7	Eli Agre Baum
7	Judy Macks
7	Gordon Osser
7	Anya Prussin
7	Robert Schwartz
9	Eli Barnes
9	Tedd Zzenia
11	Nan Wiener
12	Dev Felder Noily
12	Terry Rose
12	Kathy Simon
13	Avi Pfeffer
14	Lyssa Friedman
14	Marjorie Hilsenrad
14	Jacob Rothman
14	Nancy Sadlier
15	Susan Stahl
15	Stephen Wilson
16	Peter Barnes
16	Robert Gordon
16	Jeanette Nichols
17	Diana Buchbinder
17	Myer Johnson-Potter
17	Samuel Shaps
17	Frank Sieple
18	Dori Ehrlich
18	Deborah Hamolsky
19	Sandy Meyers
19	Martin Spector
20	Aaron Nacamulli
21	Gabriel Singer
22	Carrie Yang Costello
22	Barak Gale
23	Sara Haber
23	Jasmine Robinson
23	Eli Weinstein
24	Jeri Lynn Cohen
24	Samuel Lowinger
24	Karen Schiller
25	Brian Ellis
26	Sarah Comerchero
27	Tory Weiser
30	Lynn Eden
30	Kathy Freel
30	Henry Mach



Contributions

Adult Education Fund

Renée Bauer and Jennifer Hirsch, in honor of Robin Leonard's learning to chant Torah.

Renée Bauer and Jennifer Hirsch, in honor of Sarita Groisser's giving her first sermon.

AIDS Fund

Lisa Ochs and Lea Salem, in memory of Mark Fry.

Eva Zysman, in memory of Dr. Andrew Zysman.

Bikkur Cholim Fund

Renée Bauer and Jennifer Hirsch, in honor of Patricia Lin for her wisdom and courage.

Jeff Forman and Paul Nemrow, in memory of Sadie Newman.

Children's Education Fund

Susan Jacobson and Byron Sigal, in order to purchase furniture for Kadimah.

Rachel Schochet and Jody Patraha, in honor of Anna Stanger's becoming bat mitzvah.

General Fund

Anonymous, in memory of Katherine Mann Meyerson.

Marjorie Bennett, in memory of Eugene Bennett.

Allan Berenstein, in honor of the marriage of Louise and Bruce Kantor.

Allan Berenstein, in memory of Judy Wexler.

Rosalind Enright.

Jonathan Funk and John Arnold, in memory of Judy Wexler.

Arlene Gopan, in honor of Robin Leonard's devar Torah at the UAHC Biennial.

Jonathan Jaffe.

Jack Lasner.

Robin Leonard and Tory Weiser, in memory of Judy Wexler.

Ron Lezell, in memory of Judy Wexler.

Judith Lipmun and Ted Salomon.

Judy Macks, in memory of Ruth Macks.

Karen Messer, in honor of Rabbi Litman.

Nancy Meyer, in memory of Henry Lutz Meyer.

Lyssa Newhall, in memory of Ron Wilmot.

Romer Ocanto, in memory of Emma Ocanto.

Lisa Ochs and Lea Salem, in memory of Judy Wexler.

Barbara Josephine Rolph.

Jerry Rosenstein.

Kathleen Safer, in honor of Lisa Ochs.

Theodore Salomon.

Russell and Carol Tat, in memory of Max S. Tat.

Eli Weinstein, in memory of Judy Wexler.

Ami Zusman, in memory of Judy Wexler.

Inclusive Liturgy Fund

Batya Kalis, in memory of Judy Wexler.

Library Fund

Lucy Bernholz, in memory of Alice Bernholz Sinkoff.

Paula Fleisher, in honor of Lucy Bernholz's double chai birthday.

Mishkan Dolores Capital Campaign

Allen Berenstein, in memory of Ron Wilmot.

Allan Berenstein, in memory of Allen Harris.

James Carlson, in memory of Judy Wexler.

Tiela Chalmers, in honor of Ellie Cohen, Miki Goralsky, Greta Miskatel, Dev Felder Noily, Ruthy Talansky, Rabbi Jane Litman and the community for all of their love and support during a difficult time.

Joyce Jacobson.

Susan Jersky.

Valerie Joseph.

Sadie Katz, in memory of Marvin J. Katz.

Sophie Macks, in memory of Ruth Macks.

Eli Weinstein.

Harvey Milk Social Action Fund

Louis Hirschmann.

Prayerbook Fund

Paul Cohen and Bob Gutterman, in memory of Judy Wexler.

Paul Cohen and Bob Gutterman, in memory of Thelma Chalmers.

Lisa Niver, in honor of her parents, Judi and Frank Niver.

Lisa Niver, in honor of Susan Bernstein's being a great mom.

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Edward Pollock, in memory of Irvin Pollock.

Edward Pollock, in memory of Alan Ellis.

Special thanks to **Marjorie Hilsenrad** for her donation of two Danish Modern chairs.



Shabbat service in our new Mishkan. Photo by Michael Bettinger.

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Members' Yahrzeits

- 2 Ron Gertz
- 3 Abraham Cohen
- 6 Dennis Mitchell
- 21 Robert Stermen
- 23 Michael Randall

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ARTICLES

Please submit articles via e-mail to robinl@nolo.com. If you do not have e-mail, please submit them on a 3½-inch disk and mail to CSZ. *No late submissions will be accepted without prior approval of the Forward editor.*

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CSZ TEEN looking for babysitting and mother's helper work. Call G. Lindsey at 334-4784 for information.

CO-PARENTING OPPORTUNITY DESIRED: I am a 42-year old established, professional, Jewish, gay man living in San Francisco who eagerly seeks a lesbian (or lesbian couple) for the co-parenting of a child. Details of our shared responsibilities, both custodial and financial, are flexible. I believe it's very important to have a healthy balance amongst cultural, spiritual, open-minded family and community values. Becoming a parent has been my dream ever since I can remember. How about with you?... If so, please contact me at 282-5577.

SEARCHING FOR SHARE RENTAL: Former CSZ member Bill Ashley-Dobbin is looking to come home. I am a gay 54-year-old nonsmoker living on a fixed income. I can pay about \$300 per month. After laughter contact Leonard Brill locally at 824-7580, or Bill at 1010 University Avenue #157 San Diego, CA 92103-3398, 619/284-8919.

LESBIAN COUPLES with one child needed for dissertation research on couple relationship and decision-making regarding having another child. Participation involves completing questionnaires. For information, please call 415/273-7252 or email ddesmond@sirius.com.

CO-PARENT WANTED: I am a 34-year-old warm, educated, financially secure, CSZ member who will make a great dad. Looking for a woman or couple in the area interested in co-parenting. Flexibility, communication, stability, and raising the child in a loving and nurturing environment key. Call 415/552-9212.

OUR FAMILY IS GROWING & we need more space! We are current CSZ members who are expecting the arrival of our first child in April 1999. We are desperately seeking an affordable two bedroom flat, apartment or house to rent. Please call Ellen & Stephanie at 415/285-3626 or 415/552-6734 with any possible leads.

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office@shaarzahav.org (email)
<http://www.shaarzahav.org> (web)

Rabbi Jane Rachel Litman
rabbijanelitman@shaarzahav.org

Officers:

President, Diana Buchbinder
(337-6319, threebuchs@sprynet.com, or president@shaarzahav.org)
First Vice President, David Gellman

Second Vice President, Susan Tubbesing
Treasurer, Arthur Slepian
Recorder, Joe Hample

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Ellie Cohen
Jeff Forman
Sarita Groisser
Sara Haber
Lisa Katz
Robin Leonard
Eileen Levy
Jacob Rothman
David Stein (ex officio)
Robert Tat

CSZ Staff:

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educator@shaarzahav.org
Administrator, Lea Salem
office@shaarzahav.org
Program Director, Renée Bauer
programdirector@shaarzahav.org
Kadimah Head Teacher, Phyllis Mintzer
Administrative Assistant, Melanie Kushnir
Youth Advisor, Meredith Fenton

Committee Chairs:

Adult Education, Sue Bojdak
Archives, open
ARZA contact, Ron Lezell
Baby Chavurah, Melissa and Ari Grossman-Naples
Bequests and Donations, Richard Inlander
Bikkur Cholim, David Shaber
Bisexual Chavurah, Jim Frazin
Book Group, Mark Mackler
Building & Grounds, Arthur Cohen
Bylaws, Edward Pollock
Cemetery, Richard Inlander
Children's Education Board, Ruth Rainero
Cookbook Project, Robin Leonard
Dor Rishon, open

Dues Liaison, Eric Temple
East Bay Services, open
Endowment Fund, Merry Luskin
Environmental Action, Barak Gale and Brian Besser
Finance, Arthur Slepian
Fine Arts, Robert Gutterman
Gift Shop, Jeff Rubin
La'atid, Geoff Benjamin
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Public Relations, Sharyn Saslafsky
Rabbi Liaison, Allan Gold
Ritual, Lyssa Friedman
Social Action, Laura Lowe and Allan Berenstein
Toddler/Pre-school Chavurah, Ilana Bernstein
UAHC National Liaison, Mike Rankin
UAHC Regional Liaison, Daniel Chesir
WCGLBJO Liaison, Neil Grungras
Women's Chavurah, open

Members wishing to contact any Va'ad member or committee chair are invited to obtain his or her number from the synagogue office.

Bikkur Cholim: If you or a friend who is a member of Sha'ar Zahav is ill in the hospital or at home, and would like to have a member of the Bikkur Cholim Committee call or visit, please notify the synagogue office.

Member of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the World

Congress of Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Jewish Organizations.

Services are held every Friday evening beginning at 8:15 pm (except as noted), with an Oneg Shabbat following services. Services are generally held on the second Saturday of each month at 10 am — check calendar for each month.

1 Thursday 15 Nisan

- 6:30 pm, CSZ Community Seder, Fort Mason Officers' Club

2 Friday 16 Nisan

- 6:15 pm, Candle lighting
- 7 pm, Early service, Ora Prochovnick
- 8:15 pm, Shabbat Chol Hamoed Pesakh, led by Lyssa Friedman and Sarita Groisser

3 Saturday 17 Nisan

- 9:30 am, Torah study
- 10 am, Yizkor service, led by Rabbi Litman and Frank Yellin

4 Sunday 18 Nisan

- 6 pm, Women's Passover Seder, Congregation Emanu-El

5 Monday 19 Nisan

- 6 pm, Healing service
- 6:30 pm, Dues committee
- 7 pm, Children's Education Board

6 Tuesday 20 Nisan

- Noon, Queer Talmud, 582 Market Street, 10th floor

7 Wednesday 21 Nisan

- 6 pm, Omer meditation
- 7 pm, Newsletter editing

8 Thursday 22 Nisan

- 6:30 pm, Siddur committee

Note: Gray areas indicate religious services.

9 Friday 23 Nisan

- 6:30 pm, Tot Shabbat dinner and service in East Bay
- 6:30 pm, Shabbat dinner and reading with Lev Raphael
- 7:15 pm, Niggun service, led by Jhos Singer
- 7:21 pm, Candle lighting
- 8:15 pm, Shabbat Shemini, led by Larry Wexler and Steve Weitz; classic Reform service

10 Saturday 24 Nisan

- 9:30 am, Kadimah
- 9:30 am, Torah study
- 10 am, Shabbat morning service, led by Brian Besser and Claire Rappaport
- Noon, Diversity Dialogue: "Diverse Views of God"
- 6:30 pm, Mishkan Dolores benefit, Jenn Guttler performance

11 Sunday 25 Nisan

12 Monday 26 Nisan

- 6:30 pm, Va'ad meeting
- 7:30 pm, Yom HaShoah Remembrance, Congregation Emanu-El

13 Tuesday 27 Nisan

Yom HaShoah

14 Wednesday 28 Nisan

- 4 pm, Kadimah Hebrew class
- 6 pm, Omer meditation

15 Thursday 29 Nisan

- 7 pm, Leadership Development class

16 Friday 30 Nisan

- 7:28 pm, Candle lighting
- 8:15 pm, East Bay service
- 8:15 pm, Shabbat Tazria-Metzora, Women-led service

17 Saturday 1 Iyar

- 9:30 am, Kadimah
- 9:30 am, Torah study
- 10 am, Parent Education program: Gay Male Parenting
- 11 am, All Parent meeting
- 3 pm, HIV+ Support group

18 Sunday 2 Iyar

- 11 am, Tot family picnic and play date, Douglass Park

19 Monday 3 Iyar

- 7 pm, Membership committee

20 Tuesday 4 Iyar

- Yom HaZikaron
- Noon, Queer Talmud, 582 Market Street, 10th floor
- 7 pm, Support group for Those Struggling to Bring Children Into Their Family

21 Wednesday 5 Iyar

- Yom HaAtzma'ut
- 4 pm, Kadimah Hebrew class
- 6 pm, Omer meditation
- 7 pm, Israeli dancing - Jewish Spirituality Through Movement

22 Thursday 6 Iyar

- 6:30 pm, Siddur committee

23 Friday 7 Iyar

- 7:34 pm, Candle lighting
- 8:15 pm, Shabbat Aharei Mot/Kedoshim, led by Rabbi Litman

24 Saturday 8 Iyar

- 9:30 am, Kadimah
- 9:30 am, Torah study
- 10 am, Kadimah-led service
- 10:30 am, Tot Shabbat

25 Sunday 9 Iyar

- Sukkot in April
- UAHC Consultation on Conscience, Washington, DC

26 Monday 10 Iyar

- UAHC Consultation on Conscience, Washington, DC

27 Tuesday 11 Iyar

- UAHC Consultation on Conscience, Washington, DC

28 Wednesday 12 Iyar

- 4 pm, Kadimah Hebrew class
- 6 pm, Omer meditation

29 Thursday 13 Iyar

- 6:30 pm, Ritual committee

30 Friday 14 Iyar

- UAHC Regional Kallah @ Camp Newman
- 6 pm, HIV+ Support Group dinner
- 8:15 pm, Shabbat Emor, led by Ruthy Talansky and Tiela Chalmers

East Bay Services

April 16, 8:15 pm, at the home of Susan Tubbesing and Sarah Nathe, 3433 Brunell Dr., Oakland, 510/482-3740.